DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 469 352 CG 031 944

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| TITLE | Best Practices for School Counseling in Connecticut:Counselor Competencies, Model Job Description and Evaluation Guidelines. |
| INSTITUTION | Connecticut School Counselor Association.; Connecticut Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.; Connecticut State Dept. of Education, Hartford. |
| PUB DATE | 2001-00-00 |
| NOTE | 33p.; For "Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program," see CG 031 943. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | For full text: http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/special/BestPractices.pdf. |
| PUB TYPE | Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| EDRS PRICE | EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Competence; *Comprehensive Guidance; Comprehensive Programs; Counselor Evaluation; *Counselor Role; Educational Cooperation; Elementary Secondary Education; Models; Program Development; *School Counseling; School Counselors; *Standards |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Connecticut |

ABSTRACT

This document represents the latest collaborative effort between the Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA), the Connecticut Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (CACES) and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This document delineates best practices for establishing a comprehensive school counseling program and provides direction to school districts as they develop standards in the areas of school counselor competencies, role definition for school counselors, and the evaluation of school counselors and school counseling programs. The document is based on the Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program, published in the spring of 2000, and integrates the program standards with counselor competencies and evaluation standards. A model job description is provided to define appropriate functions and responsibilities of school counselors. School counselors and administrators are encouraged to collaborate in implementing this model that will assist school districts in their mission to prepare all students to meet high academic standards and to become productive and contributing members of society in the 21st century. Standards-based, comprehensive school counseling programs have been shown in a variety of studies to produce major benefits for students, schools, families and communities. It is hoped that this companion document to the Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program will provide additional guidance in implementing comprehensive school counseling models in Connecticut schools. (Contains 26 references.) (GCP)

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# Best Practices for School Counseling in Connecticut

## Counselor Competencies Model Job Description and Evaluation Guidelines

*Developed by the*

*Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA) and the Connecticut Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (CACES)*

*In collaboration with the*

*Connecticut State Department ofE ducation (CSDE)*

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# Best Practices for School Counseling
## in Connecticut

**Counselor Competencies,**
**Model Job Description and**
**Evaluation Guidelines**

Developed by

the Connecticut School Counselor Association
(CSCA)

and

the Connecticut Association for
Counselor Education and Supervision
(CACES)

in cooperation with

the Connecticut State Department of Education
(CSDE)

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# Preface

*Best Practices for School Counseling in Connecticut* represents the latest collaborative effort between the Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA), the Connecticut Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (CACES) and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This document delineates best practices for establishing a comprehensive school counseling program and provides direction to school districts as they develop standards in the areas of school counselor competencies, role definition for school counselors, and the evaluation of school counselors and school counseling programs. The document is based on the *Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program*, published in the spring of 2000, and integrates the program standards with counselor competencies and evaluation standards. A model job description is provided to define appropriate functions and responsibilities of school counselors.

School counselors and administrators are encouraged to collaborate in implementing this model that will assist school districts in their mission to prepare all students to meet high academic standards and to become productive and contributing members of society in the 21st century. Standards-based, comprehensive school counseling programs have been shown in a variety of studies to produce major benefits for students, schools, families and communities. It is our hope that this companion document to the *Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program* will provide additional guidance in implementing comprehensive school counseling models in Connecticut schools.

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# Acknowledgments

The Connecticut School Counselor Association, the Connecticut Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors and the State Department of Education are indebted to the individuals listed below for their time, support and dedication to the preparation of this document which is presented as a natural follow-up and partner to the recently distributed, *Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program 2000*. We hope that together they will provide direction and support for school counseling programs across our state.

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# Introduction

## Establishing Best Practices in School Counseling — Connecticut's Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Throughout its one hundred year history, the school counseling profession has responded to the political, economic and social changes in American society. Changes in demographics, family structures, expanding communication systems, advances in technology and federal and state laws related to the welfare of children, are just a few of the issues that have had an impact on the role of the school counselor and on defining the parameters of the school counseling program. These types of issues, as well as the lack of consistency of school counselor functions from district to district, have contributed to the need to set standards for the school counseling profession in order to address the challenges that face our schools and children in the 21st century.

*Best Practices for School Counseling in Connecticut* is a follow-up document to the *Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program 2000*, released in the spring of 2000. The standards document was developed by a committee of counselor educators from the Connecticut State University system and a representative group of school counselors from the elementary, middle and high school levels and is the latest collaborative effort of the Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA), the Connecticut Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (CACES) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

The concept of program standards is not new to the school counseling profession in Connecticut. Connecticut has been, and continues to be a leader in school counseling program development and in the identification of program standards, which serve as the foundation for comprehensive school counseling programs. Many documents have been published through the collaborative efforts of CSCA, CACES and the CSDE to address the issue of defining and supporting school counseling in Connecticut. These publications have addressed a wide range of school counseling issues such as program development, school counselor competencies, school counselor evaluation indicators, school counseling program standards, model programs and an assessment instrument for program development.

With the publication of the national standards by the American School Counselors Association in 1997, and the release of the *Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program 2000* in April, to all school counselors, superintendents and pupil personnel directors in Connecticut, it seemed timely to review and revise the standards for Connecticut school counselors and school counseling programs.

These standards provide direction to districts concerning the competencies that can be expected of a first year counselor, requirements for Connecticut State certification, role definition based on graduate level education and training, an appropriate evaluation model based on role definition, and standards for establishing and improving comprehensive school counseling programs.

School counselors and administrators are encouraged to collaborate with each other in adopting these models in order to set standards for school counselors and school counseling programs, to develop appropriate school counselor job descriptions and evaluation procedures, and to implement comprehensive school counseling models that address the needs of all students in the district.

# Linking Best Practices for School Counseling in Connecticut with the

## Components of Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program

| BEST PRACTICES | CURRICULUM | INDIVIDUAL PLANNING |
|---|---|---|
| School Counselor Competencies | • Demonstrates ability to design and implement a planned, sequential, and developmentally appropriate school counseling curriculum<br>• Demonstrates ability to systematically deliver the school counseling curriculum.<br>• Evaluates the impact of instruction and modifies teaching methods based on feedback<br>• Promotes understanding and appreciation for diversity | • Demonstrates the ability to assist students in establishing personal goals and future plans<br>• Articulates a method of systematic delivery of individual planning to students appropriate to their age and grade level<br>• Demonstrates ability to interpret tests, student data and other appraisal results<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of a variety of appraisal instruments and techniques to enhance student decision-making and planning |
| CT State Certification | • Principles and philosophy of developmental guidance and counseling<br>• Special education: growth and development of exceptional children<br>• Practicum experience (one semester) and full-year internship in school counseling | • Pupil appraisal and evaluation techniques<br>• Psychological and sociological theory related to children, youth and families<br>• Career development theory and practice |
| Job Description | • Designs, delivers, evaluates and revises a planned, sequential, developmentally appropriate program to include lessons in the academic, career, personal/social areas of development<br>• Delivers curriculum in systematic manner to all students<br>• Facilitates instructional process in collaboration with school staff and community resources | • Systematically develops/delivers/evaluates student planning, 6-12, through individual planning which results in a written educational/career plan for each student that is revised and updated annually<br>• Develops and addresses written objectives for individual planning for each grade level<br>• Assists in transition from elementary to middle to high school<br>• Informs students/parents about pertinent test results and their implications for educational/career planning |
| Evaluation | • Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum topics presented<br>• Designs, delivers, evaluates and revises a planned, sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum<br>• Addresses written goals and objectives in instruction<br>• Promotes a positive learning environment<br>• Facilitates instructional process using school and community resources<br>• Designs procedures to measure student outcomes<br>• Collaborates with classroom teachers in the delivery of the school counseling curriculum | • Provides a systematic approach to individual planning from middle school through high school<br>• Assists students, from middle school through high school, with course selection and schedule adjustments<br>• Provides information and guidance in the selection of schools and colleges (middle/high school)<br>• Develops with each student a written educational/career plan that is revised and updated annually<br>• Administers a career interest inventory to each student that is reviewed with the student and used for planning purposes. |
| Standards for Comprehensive Programs (1-10) | • There is a written curriculum of the school counseling instructional program delivered and coordinated by school counselors (5)<br>• The guidance curriculum promotes instruction that addresses the three primary content areas of human development, academic achievement, career development and personal/social growth (6) | • Activities and services are provided to assist students in monitoring and directing their academic achievement, career development and personal/social growth (7) |
| CT Common Core of Learning | • Students participate in School-To-Career activities through the counseling curriculum<br>• Students become aware of the world of work, and its function in society, diversity, trends, and requirements<br>• Provides lessons that address student responsibility for self and others<br>• Provides lessons on conflict resolution and mediation | • Assists students in lifelong preparation and learning through goal development and written career plans<br>• Students explore a range of careers |



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# Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components

Components of Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program

| BEST PRACTICES | RESPONSIVE SERVICES | SYSTEMS SUPPORT |
|---|---|---|
| School Counselor Competencies | • Demonstrates knowledge of theory, practice and skills for individual and group counseling<br>• Articulates theoretical basis for counseling practice<br>• Demonstrates techniques and interventions for use within academic, career, personal/social domains<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of the referral process<br>• Assesses effectiveness of one's counseling interventions and modifies accordingly<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of ethical code of the professional counseling associations (ASCA/ACA) | • Demonstrates knowledge of school /community resources<br>• Collaborates with staff and community<br>• Initiates and maintains productive working relationships with students, staff, parents and community agencies<br>• Manages time, space, materials of the counseling program<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of research and program evaluation methods<br>• Facilitates use of technology<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of school-based consultation<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of state/national program standards and laws related to the school counselor role |
| CT State Certification | • Individual and group counseling skills<br>• Psychological and sociological theory as related to children, youth and families<br>• Special education: growth and development of exceptional children<br>• Professional code of ethics | • School-based consultation theory and practice<br>• Organizational patterns and relationships of PPS to total school program<br>• Foundations and context of school counseling<br>• Research and program evaluation techniques<br>• Foundations and contexts of school counseling<br>• Issues/trends in multicultural society |
| Job Description | • Conducts goal oriented counseling sessions<br>• Makes referrals to specialists and outside agencies<br>• Provides individual counseling in academic, career and personal/social development<br>• Provides intervention/support in crisis situations<br>• Assists parents with students' school-related problems<br>• Provides group counseling to target populations<br>• Provides information to staff/parents to assist them in student development<br>• Adheres to preferred state/national practices for school counseling<br>• Adheres to ethical practices of the state and national professional counseling associations | • Communicates/consults with staff and parents about students<br>• Articulates the role of school counselor to school/community<br>• Advocates for equal access to programs and services for all students<br>• Plans and coordinates program that are an extension of the counseling program (college fair, financial aid, etc.)<br>• Reviews guidance program annually<br>• Engages in professional development<br>• Coordinates parent programs to assist with transition and planning issues<br>• Establishes a monthly/yearly planning calendar<br>• Participates in school decision making<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of local policies and state and national laws pertaining to school counseling<br>• Uses technology to enhance the program |
| Evaluation | • Assists students with transition issues<br>• Participates in PPT process when input in needed<br>• Provides individual counseling to target populations<br>• Initiates counseling relationships<br>• Demonstrates skills in terminating counseling relationships<br>• Clarifies limits of confidentiality to students<br>• Respects rights/unique characteristics of students<br>• Counsels in adjustment to a new school<br>• Demonstrates ethical practices<br>• Provides intervention/support in crisis situations<br>• Demonstrates skills in group guidance and counseling | • Demonstrates knowledge of current practices in school counseling<br>• Demonstrates sensitivity to multicultural issues<br>• Coordinates services of the school counseling program and related community services<br>• Plans, implements, maintains and evaluates the systems necessary for the support/maintenance/improvement of the program<br>• Organizes public relations for the program<br>• Participates in activities which contribute to the effective operation of the school<br>• Communicates/collaborates and consults with staff and parents<br>• Pursues professional growth<br>• Articulates the school counseling program<br>• Advocates for all students |
| Standards for Comprehensive Programs (1-10) | • The procedures, activities and services of the school counseling program ensure appropriate and timely response of academic, career and personal/social concerns (8) | • The school counseling program is organized, supported, maintained in a manner conducive to its delivery of services, and its continuous improvement (9)<br>• There are (written) identified methods for evaluating the comprehensive school counseling program, counselor competencies, and methods for assessing the satisfaction level of those served directly or indirectly by the school counseling program (10)<br>• The foundation for a comprehensive school counseling program is explained in writing and is in place: (1) philosophy, (2) goals, (3) objectives, and (4) program policies (1-4) |
| CT Common Core of Learning | • Students take responsibility for their commitments and actions | • Students demonstrate effort and persistence needed to be successful in school, work and life |



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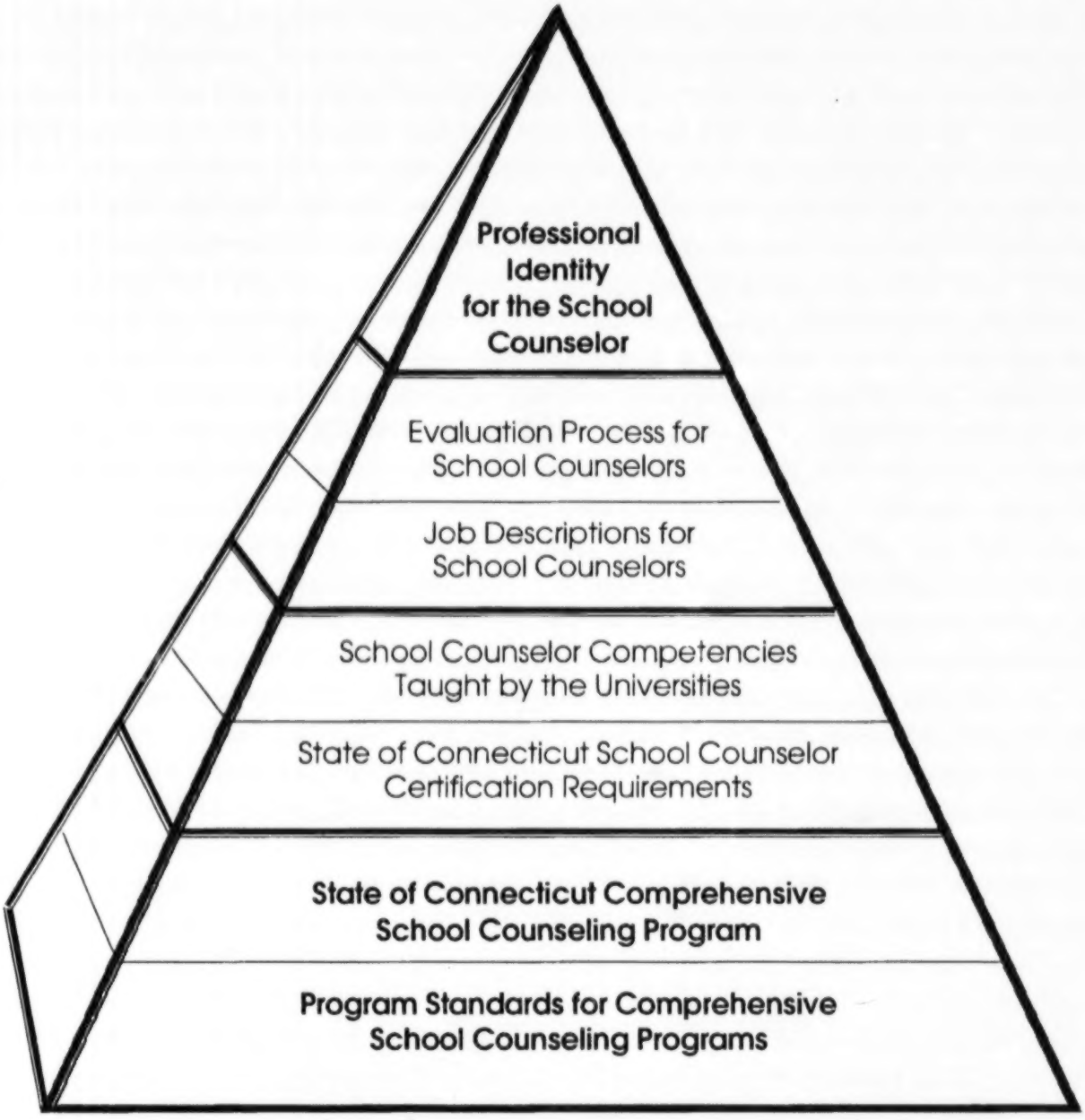
Professional Identity for the School Counselor
Evaluation Process for School Counselors
Job Descriptions for School Counselors
School Counselor Competencies Taught by the Universities
State of Connecticut School Counselor Certification Requirements
State of Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program
Program Standards for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

## Foundations for Establishing a Professional Identity for School Counselors

P. Landers and G. Parkman, Assessment Associates, 2001



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# Foundational Skills and Competencies for the Beginning School Counselor

The following skills and competencies are intended as a guide to the set of skills, attitudes and knowledge that should be demonstrated before the student in the school counseling program leaves graduate school. Some of the competencies and skills will be monitored at the classroom level in the university and others will be observed and recognized in the school counseling internship.

## Counseling

**The beginning school counselor will:**

- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of theory, practice and ethical standards relative to individual and group counseling;
- ✧ articulate the theoretical basis for one's own counseling practice;
- ✧ demonstrate appropriate counseling techniques and interventions for use within the academic, career and personal/social domains;
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to provide individual and group counseling services that are appropriate to the interests, needs, and developmental level of diverse populations and cultures;
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of one's counseling interventions and modify accordingly; and
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to interpret tests, student data and other appraisal results appropriately in the counseling environment.

## Consulting

**The beginning school counselor will:**

- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of the theory and practice of school-based consultation;
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to consult and collaborate with teachers, staff, administrators and community-based organizations in understanding and meeting the needs of all students;
- ✧ make appropriate referrals to school and community support personnel; and
- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of a wide variety of appraisal instruments and techniques to enhance decision making and planning.

## Coordinating

**The beginning school counselor will:**

- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of the school and community resources that complement the provision of counseling services.
- ✧ initiate and maintain productive working relationships with students, staff, parents, administration and community-based organizations.



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## Curriculum Management

### The beginning school counselor will:

- ✧ demonstrate the ability to design and implement a planned, sequential and developmentally appropriate school counseling curriculum in accordance with the competencies and indicators outlined by the Connecticut Comprehensive School Counseling Program;
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to deliver the program using systematic approaches;
- ✧ promote understanding and appreciation for diverse populations and cultures;
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to evaluate the impact of instruction; and
- ✧ demonstrate the ability to modify teaching methods based on feedback and evaluation.

## Individual Planning

### The beginning school counselor will:

- ✧ demonstrate the ability to assist students in establishing personal goals and developing future plans; and
- ✧ articulate a method of systematic delivery of individual planning to all students appropriate to their age and grade level.

## Managing

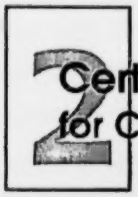
### The beginning school counselor will:

- ✧ manage time, space, materials and equipment for the provision of the counseling program;
- ✧ understand, organize and facilitate the use of technology;
- ✧ conduct periodic evaluations of the counseling program; and
- ✧ use evaluations of the counseling program to modify programs and activities.

## Professionalism

### The beginning school counselor will:

- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of the ethical standards of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA);
- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association.(ACA);
- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of state and national program standards;
- ✧ demonstrate knowledge of the federal and state laws pertinent to the role, function and services of the school counselor; and
- ✧ participate in professional development activities.



# Certification Requirements and Regulations for Connecticut School Counselors

The school counselor endorsement is required for all staff members serving in the employ of a board of education as a school counselor in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Current requirements for the initial educator, provisional educator, and professional educator certificates follow. These regulations are scheduled for revision in 2003 (draft regulations also attached). Please note that although the 2003 regulations have been approved, changes may occur prior to or after their implementation. There are two major differences between the current regulations and the regulations that will replace them in 2003.

1. Currently, specific *course content* is required in seven different subject areas, plus a special education course. In 2003, programs of study should be specifically designed to prepare school counselors in a developmental model of school counseling and *demonstrate competence* in eleven subject areas, plus a course in special education.

2. The second area of difference is in the practicum and internship experiences. Currently, regulations require a progression of supervised experiences in counseling and guidance through laboratory and practicum. In 2003, regulations will require a progression of field experiences in *elementary and secondary* public school settings, with students of *different ages, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and exceptionalities.*

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## Current Certification Regulations

State Board of Education

## D

## School Counselor

### Sec. 10-145d-555. When required

This certificate is required for a person serving in the employ of a board of education as a school counselor in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 or coordinating school counseling services within a single school, except that an intermediate administrator or supervisor certification may be required in accordance with Section 10-145d-572.

### Sec. 10-145d-556. Initial educator certificate requirements

To receive the initial educator certificate to serve as a school counselor, the applicant shall meet the following requirements, in addition to meeting the assessment requirements, as appropriate:

(a) Holds a professional educator certificate; or holds or is eligible to hold an initial educator certificate, and has had either 30 school months of successful teaching experience or has completed a full-time supervised school internship of 10 school months in a school (Pre-K through 12) setting. For the purposes of this section, internship is defined as a full-time placement of a candidate in a school setting, including continued supplementary seminars or prescribed study under the supervision of the preparing institution. The internship shall include the counseling of students, consulting with parents and staff observations and substantial participation in classroom instruction, involvement in curriculum development and other professional activities in which a school staff is involved. This internship is in addition to that required in a practicum, as described in subsection (e) below;

(b) Holds a master's degree;

(c) Has completed, as part of or in addition to the master's degree, a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit in a planned program in school counseling services as attested to by an institution approved for the preparation of school counselors;

(d) Presents the recommendation of the preparing institution, which shall be based on evidence of knowledge, skills and understanding gained from study or experience to be distributed among each of the following:

(1) Principles and philosophy of developmental guidance and counseling;
(2) Psychological and sociological theory as related to children, youth and families;
(3) Career development theory and practice;
(4) Individual and group counseling procedures;
(5) Organizational patterns and relationships of pupil personnel services to total school program and community;
(6) Pupil appraisal and evaluation techniques; and
(7) School-based consultation theory and practice;

(e) Presents evidence from the preparing institution of a progression of supervised experiences in counseling and guidance through laboratory and practicum; and

(f) A course of study in special education comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.

### Sec. 10-145d-557. Provisional educator certificate requirements

To receive a provisional educator certificate for school counselor, an applicant shall present evidence of meeting the preparation and eligibility requirements for an initial educator certificate to serve as a school counselor, in addition to meeting the following requirements:

(a) Has successfully completed the BEST assessment, as may have been made available by the Board, and 10 school months of successful service under the initial educator certificate, interim educator certificate or durational shortage area permit; or

(b) Has completed, within 10 years prior to application, at least 30 school months of successful teaching as a school counselor in a public school, approved nonpublic school or nonpublic school approved by the appropriate governing body in another state; or

(c) Has served a board of education successfully under a provisional teaching or provisional educator certificate for the school year immediately preceding application. The subject area or field taught during the preceding year shall be the same for which provisional educator certification is sought.

### Sec. 10-145d-558. Professional educator certificate requirements

To receive a professional educator certificate for school counselor, an applicant shall present evidence of having met the following requirements:

(a) Has completed 30 school months of successful service under the provisional educator certificate, interim educator certificate or provisional teaching certificate; and

(b) Has completed 45 semester hours of graduate credit at an approved institution or institutions in counseling and related areas including those required for the initial educator certificate. The candidate shall complete a program of additional semester hours of graduate credit designed to strengthen the skills and knowledge needed for the provisional educator certificate, and to include work in related disciplines such as psychology, sociology and special education.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## Certification Regulations Effective July 1, 2003

State Board of Education

## Part V

## Special Services

**School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Speech and Language Pathologist**

## A

## School Counselor Endorsement

### (NEW) Sec. 10-145d-700. When Required

The school counselor endorsement is required for a person serving in the employ of a board of education as a school counselor in early childhood, elementary, and secondary school settings.

### (NEW) Sec. 10-145d-701. Initial Educator Certificate Requirements

To receive an initial educator certificate endorsed in school counselor, an applicant shall meet the following requirements:

(a) Hold a master's degree and complete an approved planned program of study in school counseling from a regionally accredited institution;

(b) Meet testing requirements: PRAXIS I-CBT (or meet the waiver requirements), PRAXIS II, or its equivalent as approved by the Board;

(c) Complete an approved planned program of study and experience at a regionally accredited institution specifically designed to prepare school counselors to utilize a developmental model of school counseling and demonstrate competence in:

(1) Human growth and development, understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels;
(2) Social and cultural foundations, understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society;
(3) Helping relationships, understanding of counseling and consultation processes;
(4) Group work, understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches;
(5) Career and life style development, understanding of the college search, selection and admission processes, career development and related life factors;
(6) Appraisal, understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation;
(7) Research and program evaluation, understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal consideration in research.
(8) Professional orientation, understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards and credentialing;
(9) Foundations and contexts of school counseling to include emphasis in developmental guidance instructional activities, services and programming;
(10) Collaborating/consulting with other professionals within the school and community, families, adults, and agencies to support children and adolescent's development, learning and well-being; and

(11) Recognizing the role of the public school and its responsibility for providing educational equity and opportunity, including the provision of special education as defined by state and federal regulations;

(d) Complete a progression of field experiences and internship directly supervised by a certificated school counselor, in collaboration with the preparing institution, in elementary and secondary public school settings, with students of different ages, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and exceptionalities, which provides for application of knowledge and mastery of counseling skills;

(e) Complete 30 school months of successful teaching in a public school under a valid certificate or in an accredited or state approved nonpublic school; or complete a 10 month, full time school counseling residency in a public school, which includes a ten-week guided teaching experience using a developmental guidance curriculum, under the direct supervision of a certificated school counselor, and the preparing institution; and

(f) Complete a course of study in special education comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.

### (NEW) Sec. 10-145d-702. Provisional Educator Certificate Requirements

To receive a provisional educator certificate endorsed in school counselor, an applicant shall meet the preparation and eligibility requirements for an initial educator certificate, and the following requirements:

(a) For persons holding a Connecticut initial educator certificate, successfully complete the beginning educator program assessment, if available, and 10 school months of successful service as a school counselor under the initial educator certificate; or

(b) Complete, within 10 years prior to application, at least 30 school months of successful service as a school counselor, in an accredited or state approved nonpublic school in Connecticut or out of state; or out of state public school under a valid certificate.

### (NEW) Sec. 10-145d-703. Professional Educator Certificate

To receive a professional educator certificate endorsed in school counselor, an applicant shall meet the following requirements:

(a) Complete 30 school months of successful service under the provisional educator certificate; and

(b) Complete 45 hours of graduate credit in school counseling and related areas, including those required for the initial certificate at regionally accredited institutions.

# 3 Model Format for School Counselor Job Description

## Qualifications

a) Hold a master's degree in school counseling from an accredited college or university.
b) Meet the certification requirements for initial educator or higher from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

## Primary Functions

a) Develop and deliver the school counseling curriculum in a classroom setting.
b) Assist students in the areas of academic and career planning and in social/emotional development.
c) Provide individual and small group counseling in a variety of settings.
d) Consult and collaborate with teachers, staff and parents in understanding and meeting the needs of students in the school setting.
e) Make appropriate referrals of students and parents to outside agencies and specialists.
f) Participate in activities that contribute to the effective operation of the school.
g) Plan, evaluate and revise the school counseling program.
h) Pursue continuous professional growth to stay abreast of the field.
i) Promote an understanding and appreciation of diverse populations and cultures.
j) Monitor and advise students and their parents as to progress toward promotion/graduation.
k) Prepare students for the transition to the next level: middle school, high school and post high school activities.

## Major Job Responsibilities

### A. Counseling

- Provide individual planning sessions to students in the areas of academic planning and success, career awareness and social/emotional development in accordance with planned objectives for grade level.
- Conduct structured goal-oriented counseling sessions in systematic response to identified needs of groups of children. Themes include academic skill building, social skill development, career awareness, conflict resolution, family issues and making healthy choices.
- Assist in the transition to middle school, high school and to post high school options.
- Interpret tests, student data and other assessment results appropriately in the counseling environment.
- Provide individual counseling in response to student requests.



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## B. Consulting

- Provide information and skills to parents, school staff, administration and the community to assist them in helping students in academic, career and social development.
- Take a leadership role in the infusion of counseling content into the curriculum, staff development and parent education programs.
- Assist parents in addressing school related problems and issues. Refer students and their parents, as needed, to appropriate specialists, special programs and/or outside agencies.
- Inform students and their parents as to pertinent test results and their implications for educational and career planning.

## C. Coordinating

- Promote the liaison and coordination of school activities and resources and communicate between and among home, school, community agencies and business and industry.
- Advocate for equal access to programs and services for all students.
- Plan and coordinate programs such as career and college fairs, scholarships, and other extensions of the counseling curriculum.
- Coordinate parent education programs to assist students in making a smooth transition from elementary to middle school, middle school to the high school and in planning post high school options.

## D. Curriculum Management

- Design, deliver, evaluate and revise a planned sequential and developmentally appropriate school counseling curriculum to include lessons in academic success, career awareness and planning and personal/social growth and understanding.
- Deliver the curriculum in a systematic manner using diverse strategies and settings.
- Facilitate the instructional process in collaboration with school and community resources.

## E. Individual Planning

- Systematically develop and evaluate planning for high school and post high school on an annual basis through individual planning which results in a written career/educational plan for each student.
- Address written objectives for grade level.

## F. Managing

- Review the school counseling program annually with other district counselors and administrators. Establish a planning calendar for activities.
- Plan, implement, maintain and evaluate the systems necessary for the support, maintenance and improvement of the school counseling program.
- Activities include but are not limited to preparation of budget, production of printed materials, guides, etc. that support the program.

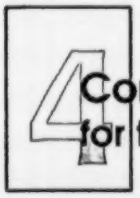
- Contribute to a program of public relations.
- Articulate the school counseling program to students, parents, teachers staff and community.
- Develop and maintain skills needed to utilize technology systems and participate in professional development activities.

## G. School System

- Participate in school decision making and in activities, which contribute to the effective operation of the school.
- Cooperate and collaborate with other professionals in enhancing the education of students. Communicate with the administrators, teachers and staff, parents and students as to the role of the school counseling program in the overall educational process of the school.

## H. Professionalism

- Adhere to the ethical standards of state and national school counselor associations.
- Adhere to preferred practices prescribed by state and national school counselor associations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of local policies and state and federal laws pertaining to school counseling.
- Demonstrate personal growth and professional development.



# Connecticut Guidelines for the Evaluation of School Counselors

All professionals value the opinion of others as to their perceptions of how well they do their jobs. We may or may not agree with the evaluator's opinions, but they make an impact upon our actions. Involvement in the evaluation process lets counselors know the administration cares about what they do and includes them in the core of the school. Administrators tend to evaluate those things that they value.

Past practice in the evaluation of school counselors in Connecticut has been varied with many school districts relying on the same process and forms as those designed for classroom teachers. The personnel conducting the evaluation may or may not be certified as school counselors or even familiar with school counseling. It is not unusual for counselors to be left out of the evaluation process altogether. This practice was evident in a recent study of Connecticut high schools conducted by graduate students at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU).[1]

The evaluation document draws heavily from the results of a study[2] funded by the Connecticut State University Center for Educational Excellence that utilized over sixty participants to create and validate a bank of criteria to be used in the evaluation of school counselors.

The evaluation format and process should flow from the school counselor job description, which was developed to deliver and meet the requirements of the comprehensive school counseling model.

The models proposed here provide a format that administrators may follow to conduct an evaluation of school counselors in a comprehensive and appropriate manner.

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[1] Bugnacki, M., Fauerbach, T. and Johnson, S. (2001). *A Survey of School Counseling Programs: An Investigation into the Job Descriptions, Counselor and Program Evaluations in Connecticut Public High Schools.* Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT.

[2] Parkman, G, Tarasuk, P., Fossbender, A. and Walsh, H. Validated Indicators for the Evaluation of School Counselor Personnel. Connecticut State University Center for Educational Excellence, 1990.



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# Introduction

The purpose of having concise evaluation procedures address the reality that evaluations may be conducted by evaluators that are both certified and non-certified in school counseling. This document provides a compass with which evaluators can navigate their way through the evaluation process.

The immediate supervisor for the school counselor shall complete the following three components.

## 1. Annual Goal Setting

Supervisor shall meet with each counselor by early November to set goals for the year.

- Goals should be mutually agreed upon.
- Goals may be personal growth or system related.
- Supervisors will assist in the attainment of mutually agreed goals.
- A progress report will be due from the supervisee to the supervisor by January 1st.
- A final report on goal attainment is due to the supervisor by mid May.

## 2. Formal Observation

Counselors should receive a minimum of one formal observation per year.

This observation should include:
- A pre-observation conference to discuss the objectives of the activity to be observed.
- A post-observation conference to review and process the observation.

## 3. Summary Evaluation

Using the following list of indicators as a guide, the immediate supervisor will cite areas of particular strength as well as those areas in need of improvement.
*(Systems may want to adapt the rating system, if any, used for summary evaluation of other professional, certified staff. A dual rating system of self-evaluation and supervisor evaluation may also be used.)*

### Counseling

#### The counselor:

- ✧ assists students in developing decision-making skills;
- ✧ demonstrates knowledge of family development and family life;
- ✧ employs knowledge of career development;
- ✧ makes appropriate student referrals;
- ✧ demonstrates the ability to provide individual counseling to target populations;
- ✧ demonstrates ability to initiate counseling relationships with students;
- ✧ demonstrates skill and sensitivity in terminating counseling relationships;
- ✧ displays respect for the rights and unique characteristics of students;
- ✧ counsels students in their adjustment to a new school;
- ✧ creates a counseling environment which fosters feelings of acceptance and empathy;

- ✧ demonstrates sensitivity to multicultural and multiethnic issues in counseling;
- ✧ modifies one's own professional behavior in response to constructive criticism;
- ✧ demonstrates ability in group counseling;
- ✧ assists with the transition from elementary to middle school, middle school to high school and to post-high school options;
- ✧ provides interventions and support in crisis situations;
- ✧ provides information and guidance in selecting schools and colleges (middle and high schools); and
- ✧ assists students in making schedule adjustments due to conflicts in scheduling (middle and high schools).

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (counseling):**

## Consulting

**The counselor:**

- ✧ provides school expertise for community agencies;
- ✧ provides counseling perspective and relevant information to other school departments;
- ✧ assists instructional personnel in relating subject matter to career development;
- ✧ shares general information related to family development and family life;
- ✧ shares information relative to secondary planning;
- ✧ participates in the special education and ADA, Section 504 planning process where counselor input is required;
- ✧ shares background information pertinent to student performance with appropriate parties;
- ✧ shares information pertinent to available community resources;
- ✧ provides counseling perspective in the development of school initiatives;
- ✧ employs mediation skills with the school population;
- ✧ contributes expertise to the development and implementation of district wide policies and procedures;
- ✧ plans and delivers parent programs;
- ✧ interprets test and career interest inventory information to target populations; and
- ✧ provides information on the selection of post secondary education and training (high school).

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (consulting):**

## Coordinating

**The counselor:**

- ✧ coordinates the services and activities of the school counseling program;
- ✧ coordinates community resources related to the services and activities of the school counseling program;
- ✧ develops cooperative working relationships between the school and community agencies, business and industry;
- ✧ coordinates school resources to ensure the provision of school counseling information to target populations;
- ✧ initiates communication between the school counseling department and home;
- ✧ facilitates the provision of career and vocational information to all students;
- ✧ collaborates with members of the instructional staff to maximize the academic experience for students;
- ✧ serves as liaison among students, parents, teachers and system support personnel; and
- ✧ coordinates programs for students and parents to assist in post secondary planning.

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (coordinating):**

## Managing the Curriculum

**The counselor:**

- ✧ demonstrates knowledge of school counseling topics presented;
- ✧ designs, evaluates and revises a planned sequential and developmentally appropriate school counseling curriculum;
- ✧ addresses goals and objectives in units of instruction;
- ✧ employs a variety of strategies to achieve instructional objectives in the delivery of the curriculum;
- ✧ promotes a positive learning environment;
- ✧ facilitates the instructional process by using school and community resources;
- ✧ modifies teaching methods using a variety of evaluation techniques;
- ✧ designs procedures to measure student outcomes; and
- ✧ collaborates with classroom teacher in the delivery of the school counseling curriculum.

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (managing the curriculum):**

## Individual Planning

**The counselor:**

- ✧ provides a systematic approach to individual planning of postsecondary planning using academic and career information (middle and high schools).

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (individual planning):**

## Managing

**The counselor:**

- ✧ manages time, space, materials and equipment for the provision of the school counseling program;
- ✧ uses technolog; to improve the delivery of the program;
- ✧ implements and evaluates a developmental school counseling program;
- ✧ organizes the public relations program of the school counseling program;
- ✧ conducts evaluations of the school counseling program and interprets the results to the school and community;
- ✧ uses evaluations to modify the school counseling program;
- ✧ plans, implements, maintains and evaluates the systems necessary for the support and maintenance of the school counseling program;
- ✧ uses applied research to modify the program;
- ✧ manages the collection, use, retention, and destruction of educational records in accordance with local policies, state and federal laws;
- ✧ manages resources for researching opportunities such as scholarships, military, apprentices and other post secondary options;
- ✧ supervises the clerical workers, paraprofessionals, volunteers, etc. who are assigned to the school counselin g program; and
- ✧ articulates the school counseling program to students, parents and staff.

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (managing):**

## Contributing

### The counselor:

- participates in activities which contribute to the effective operation of the school;
- establishes and maintains effective relationships with staff and administrators;
- communicates with administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents and the community regarding the school counseling program;
- participates in school-wide decision making; and
- is active on school and district committees.

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (contributing):**

## Promoting Professionalism

### The counselor:

- adheres to the ethical standards of the state and national school counselor associations;
- adheres to preferred practices prescribed by state and national school counselor associations;
- demonstrates knowledge of local policies and state and federal laws pertaining to school guidance and counseling;
- demonstrates personal growth and professional development;
- advocates for equal access to programs and services for all students;
- demonstrates knowledge of current practices in the field of school counseling; and
- clarifies limits of confidentiality to students.

**Strengths:**

**Areas in Need of Growth (promoting professionalism):**

## Overall Summary (narrative)

# 5 Standards for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs

For two decades, on state, regional and national levels, school counselors and counselor educators have advanced the proposition that counseling can and should become more preventive in its focus and more developmental in its content. The discipline of school counseling must balance traditional and remedial services with a program that systematically and sequentially addresses the academic, career and personal/social needs of students.

The standards presented in this document identify two major categories:

1. Program Foundations; and
2. Program Components.

The four major program components are:

1. Curriculum;
2. Individual Planning;
3. Responsive Services; and
4. Systems Support.

These program components, based upon a program foundation of written philosophy, goals, objectives and school counseling policies, are consistent with the conceptual framework of a comprehensive school counseling program. The emphasis of a school counseling program is on the delivery of a comprehensive program to all students. A well-organized self-study, based on the standards, should culminate with a plan for program improvement and planned, ongoing program evaluation.

## PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS

*Program foundations include those elements of agreement on which a program may be built: Philosophy, Goals, Competencies and Policies*

### Philosophy

**Standard 1: There is a written statement of the philosophy of the school district's school counseling program.**

A school district meeting this standard has a philosophy statement that provides a clear, succinct declaration of the mission of the school counseling program. The statement of philosophy is complementary to the established philosophy of the school district and clearly delineates that the school counseling program is for all students.

## Goals

**Standard 2: There is a written statement of the goals of the school district's school counseling program.**

A school district meeting this standard has a statement of goals that provide a clear, succinct declaration of the general outcomes to which the school counseling program is committed. The statement of goals is compatible with the school counseling program's statement of philosophy.

## Competencies

**Standard 3: There is a written statement of the competencies of the school district's school counseling program.**

The school district meeting this standard has a statement of student competencies that is complementary to the school counseling program's statement of philosophy and goals. The competencies provide clear, succinct declarations of specific, measurable skills, attitudes and attributes to be acquired by the school counseling program's client population, and are congruent with the academic, career and personal/social developmental competencies found in the American School Counselor Association's document, *Implementing the National Standards for School Counseling Programs (1997)*. The district conducts a periodic needs assessment of students, teachers, administrators, and parents to determine current student needs.

## Policies

**Standard 4: There is a written statement of the policies and administrative regulations pertaining to the school counseling program which have been approved by the Board of Education.**

The school district meeting this standard has a statement of Board of Education policies pertaining specifically to the school counseling program which are clearly defined and are complementary to other educational programs and student policies of the school district as well as with legal mandates and the ethical standards delineated in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, the ACA Ethical Standards for Internet On-Line Counseling and the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics. There is evidence that written policies concerning confidentiality are clearly posted, written policies for student records are consistent with state and federal mandates, and the school counseling program applies written policies and regulations to ensure a quality comprehensive school counseling program and district-wide uniformity. There is also evidence that a statement of policies and administrative regulations promote collaboration among pupil services disciplines and with school personnel, families and community agencies.

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS

*School counseling program components include those elements that should be in place so that the comprehensive school counseling program can function effectively. There are four components: Curriculum, Individual Planning, Responsive Services and Systems Support*

## Curriculum

**Standard 5: There is a written curriculum of the school counseling instructional program delivered and/or coordinated by school counselors.**

The school district meeting this standard has a school counseling curriculum that is designed to facilitate the systematic delivery of activities to all students and is consistent with the school counseling program's statements of philosophy, goals and objectives. There should be evidence that the curriculum is documented in writing and is based on a needs assessment of the school counseling program's client population. There should also be evidence that the curriculum is planned, ongoing and systematic, and includes a clear explanation of the scope and sequence of its units of instruction. The curriculum should include statements of student competencies for each grade level and the benchmarks that are identified and used in the assessment of student competencies in Grades 5, 8, 11 and 12. There should also be evidence that the curriculum indicates the methods and time lines for delivery of units of instruction including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small-group discussions, presentations to assemblies and collaborative activities with teachers, pupil personnel specialists and other qualified personnel. A plan for developing student competencies in coping with life changes and transitions from grade levels or buildings within the academic setting should be part of the curriculum, and the responsibilities of school counselors and staff involved in life change and transition activities clearly delineated.

**Standard 6: The curriculum promotes instruction that addresses the three primary content areas of human development: academic achievement, career development, and personal/social growth.**

The school district meeting this standard has a curriculum that has a balanced emphasis among the three primary domains of human development. There is evidence of the use of standardized tests, instruments and surveys to provide information necessary for student academic and career planning and documentation to indicate the school counselor has as key role in the career development of all students.

## Individual Planning

**Standard 7: Activities and services are provided to assist students in monitoring and directing their academic achievement, career development, and personal/social growth.**

The school district meeting this standard has evidence of the provision of ongoing, systematic activities designed to assist the individual student in establishing personal goals and in developing future plans. There is evidence of as systematic delivery of individual planning to all students appropriate to their age and grade level and includes a documented format with student competencies in measurable forms

## Responsive Services

**Standard 8: The procedures, activities and services of the school counseling program ensure appropriate and timely response to academic, career and personal/social concerns.**

The school district meeting this standard has evidence that school counselors offer a range of services along the continuum from early intervention to crisis response, and make appropriate interventions in response to immediate and/or crisis needs of students. There is documentation that school counselors consult with parents, school personnel and other identified parties when developing plans and strategies for facilitating student development Specific ongoing responsive services provided by school counselors, such as individual and group counseling, crisis management and suicide prevention, are planned and goal focused. There are written procedures to be used in crisis situations.

## Systems Support

**Standard 9: The school counseling program is organized, supported, maintained and managed in a manner conducive to its delivery of services and its continuous improvement.**

The school district meeting this standard has evidence that:

- ✧ The school district's organizational chart delineates clearly the administrative personnel to whom school counselors are accountable;
- ✧ A state certified school counselor is assigned the responsibility of managing the school counseling program and supervising and evaluating school counselors;
- ✧ The individual who is assigned the responsibility of managing the school counseling program is allotted sufficient time and adequate opportunity to perform his or her responsibilities;
- ✧ School counseling services are provided by state certified personnel who are designated as "school counselors" and are employees of the school system;
- ✧ A current written job description exists which includes requisite qualifications for employment as a school counselor and specifies school counselor professional duties and responsibilities;
- ✧ Adequate facilities and support services are provided to school counselors, including adequate individual office space, individual phones, sufficient computer and data processing services and an appropriate private area for small group school counseling activities;
- ✧ Professional development activities specifically related to school counseling concerns are offered;
- ✧ There is a specific plan to communicate program activities and services to all constituents served by the school counseling program;
- ✧ The school counseling program provided pertinent information for academic/career planning and decision making and that priorities are clearly communicated to the program's stakeholders; and
- ✧ The program is consistently delivered by all school counselors from year to year.

**Standard 10: There are formal methods established for assessing the comprehensive school counseling program, the school counselor competencies, and the satisfaction levels of those persons who are served directly or indirectly by the school counseling program.**

The school district meeting this standard has evidence that a planned, systematic evaluation of the school counseling program is conducted on an ongoing basis to determine the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the program. The evidence includes a documented plan for evaluating student competencies established in the school counseling program, a calendar of timely assessments, and written procedures and documentation for assessing client satisfaction. The assessment documents addressing client satisfaction, focus on activities that are generally accepted within the purview of the school counseling program. There is documentation that the school counselor's job description forms the basis for evaluating individual school counselors.

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